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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5752  
INFO RHEHNSC/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 6807  
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO PRIORITY 7421  
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC 2570

UNCLAS SAO PAULO 000981

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STATE INR/R/MR; IIP/R/MR; WHA/PD

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TAGS: [KMDR](#) [OPRC](#) [OIIP](#) [ETRD](#) [BR](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR: FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF  
9/11; SAO PAULO

#### The Worst Five Years of America

Lead editorial in center-right O Estado de S. Paulo (9/10) states:  
"Not even in his most glorified fantasies (...) could Osama Bin Laden have imagined the series of disasters in politics, diplomacy and the military arena and to the image of the United States overall, that would be perpetrated by the most near-sighted, authoritarian and unprepared head of government to come to Washington in memory, with much worse consequences for international relations and the safety of the nations than those left by the failure of the U.S. in Vietnam.... President George Bush, Vice-President Dick Cheney, political operator Karl Rove, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and [then] National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, backed by an assortment of ideologues, high-level officials, congressmen, republican leaders and opinion makers, pulverized the enormous solidarity movement that embraced the U.S. after the barbaric attacks...[The] president...took advantage of the outrage to attack a former ally, dictator Saddam Hussein. Whatever his many crimes, he never had anything to do with Islamic extremists in general or with the 9/11 perpetrators in particular and neither did he have nor was he about to have the weapons of mass destruction invoked to justify the "war of choice...." The worst is that the shot backfired enormously. At the cost of dozens of thousands Iraqi lives and over 2,600 Americans, the country once oppressed by Saddam became an arena for a stupid war of everyone against everyone.... But nothing seems to shake the White House's cynicism, where history keeps being rewritten...the unbreakable Bush, with the strength of the righteous, leads-on the Iraq front and wherever else Good faces Evil-the great 'ideological war of the 21st Century.' It is surreal.

#### Another 9/11

Liberal Folha de S.Paulo (9/11) editorializes: "In light of the catastrophe that the U.S. unilateral military intervention in Iraq has turned into, and the need to tirelessly fight this dangerous form of irrational politics that Islamic terror engenders, we must seek inspiration in the teachings of recent history. Instead of recreating regimes-without any previous offense to justify military reaction-it is desirable that the only superpower that is left exercise restraint and pragmatism when dealing with other nations, and go back to valuing the UN. If it insists on its current policy, Washington will isolate itself even further, instead of isolating terror.  
McMullen